

## RESPONSE

U.S. Appln. No. 10/689,543

In response, Applicants submit herewith an article entitled "Focus on Pillaring and Mixed Al13-x Fex PILCs" F. BERGAYA, CEA/PLS Newsletter, 1994, 7, 11-12. The article clearly indicates specific conditions for obtaining a bridged clay, including heating from 200°C up to 700°C (first column, first paragraph). Furthermore, the article clearly proves that US '645 does not disclose the preparation of a bridged clay. The conditions for bridging are not present in US '645 because no appropriate heat treatment is disclosed therein.

The distinction between the bridged clay of the claimed invention and the intercalated material of US '645 is captured and reflected simply by use of the term "bridged" in independent Claim 12.

It is not necessary for Applicants to include further recitations in Claim 12, such as a recitation describing the conditions to achieve bridging. Such recitations would be redundant. The suggestion that it is necessary to include conditions of bridging in Claim 12 necessarily implies that without the recitation of such conditions a person of ordinary skill in the art would understand the terms "bridging" and "intercalating" to be interchangeable. This is simply not the case.

The term "bridged" speaks for itself. A person of ordinary skill in the art reading the term "bridged" in Claim 12 does not need to be told the conditions necessary to achieve bridging. A person of ordinary skill in the art understands what is meant by bridging in Claim 12 (two adjacent lamellae are connected together with the help of a metal compound, the metal compound having a chemical link with each of the lamellae) and understands that bridging is distinct from US '645's disclosure of intercalating with an inorganic metal precursor.

Applicants would like to point out that the article being submitted herewith was also submitted during the prosecution of the parent application (serial no. 09/866,836), which is now U.S. Patent No. 6,674,009.

Applicants would like to emphasize that the claims of the '009 Patent are directed to a composition of a bridged clay. Accordingly, the present divisional application, containing claims drawn to the process for obtaining the patented composition, should also pass to issue.

RESPONSE

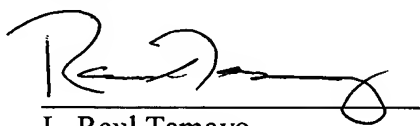
U.S. Appln. No. 10/689,543

Indeed, present Claims 12-15 were improperly canceled by an Examiner's Amendment attached to the Notice of Allowability mailed with the Notice of Allowance on July 2, 2003, in the parent application. Claims 12-15 were improperly canceled because where an applicant elects claims directed to a product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims which depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim are supposed to be rejoined. The improper cancellation in the parent application caused Applicants to have to file the present divisional application.

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



L. Raul Tamayo  
Registration No. 47,125

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC  
Telephone: (202) 293-7060  
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

**23373**

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: July 8, 2005